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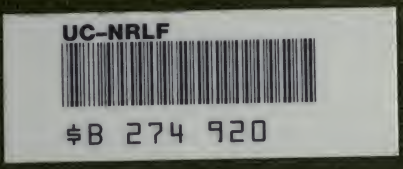

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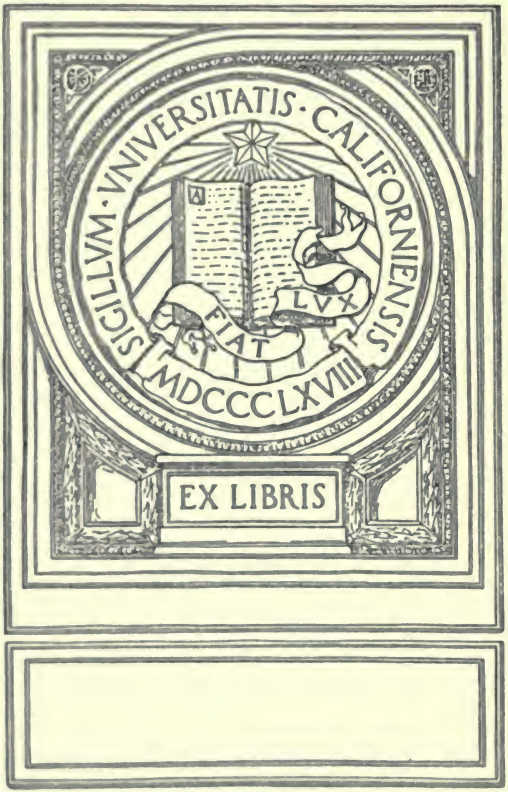
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THE

OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN

AND OTHER VERSES

BY

JOHN RUSSELL HAYES

PHILADELPHIA
JOHN C. WINSTON & CO.
1895

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Copyright, 1895,
By John Russell Hayes.

SWARTHMORE, fairest!
Ah, to thee
Must my earliest offerings be,—
To thee upon thy grassy hill
'Mid thy meadows sweet and still,
With thy charms that dearer grow
As the hasting seasons go.
In the summer of my youth
Drank I at thy founts of truth,
Joying in the ample store
Thou didst ever freely pour,—
Lessons out of Nature's page,
Words of scholar and of sage,
And the love of poets old
Chanting numbers all of gold.
Happy years and dreamy-sweet,
Happy years, but all too fleet!
Holding these in memory
I inscribe my Book to thee.

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THE OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN.

The house is hoary with the mould of years,
  And crumbling are its ivy-covered walls;
The rain-storms dim it with their misty tears,
  And sadly o'er its gloom the sunlight falls.
Ah, different far the sweet old garden there,
For balmy rains and warming suns but make it glow
    more fair.

So bright and lovely is the dear old place,
  It seems as though the country's very heart
Were centered here, and that its antique grace
  Must ever hold it from the world apart.
Immured it lies among the meadows deep,
Its flowery stillness beautiful and calm as softest
    sleep.

Some like a garden where the hand of art
  Appears in every terrace, walk, and bed,
Where vases stand in even rows apart
  And shrubs are taught symmetric shade to spread:
But little art I wish; enough for me
This garden where the flowers grow in sweet
    simplicity.

Fair is each budding thing the garden shows,
  From spring's frail crocus to the latest bloom
Of fading autumn. Every wind that blows
  Across that glowing tract sips rare perfume
From all the tangled blossoms tossing there;—
Soft winds, they fain would linger long, nor any
    farther fare!

The morning-glories ripple o'er the hedge
  And fleck its greenness with their tinted foam;
Sweet wilding things, up to the garden's edge
  They love to wander from their meadow home,
To take what little pleasure here they may
Ere all their silken trumpets close before the warm
    mid-day.

The larkspur lifts on high its azure spires,
  And up the arbor's lattices are rolled
The quaint nasturtium's many-colored fires;
  The tall carnation's breast of faded gold
Is striped with many a faintly-flushing streak,
Pale as the tender tints that blush upon a baby's
    cheek.

The old sweet-rocket sheds its fine perfumes;
With golden stars the coreopsis flames;
And here are scores of sweet old-fashioned blooms
Dear for the very fragrance of their names,—
Poppies and gillyflowers and four-o'clocks,
Cowslips and candytuft and heliotrope and
hollyhocks,

Harebells and peonies and dragon-head,
Petunias, scarlet sage and bergamot,
Verbenas, ragged-robins, soft gold-thread,
The bright primrose and pale forget-me-not,
Wall-flowers and crocuses and columbines,
Narcissus, asters, hyacinths, and honeysuckle
vines,

Foxgloves and marigolds and mignonette,
Dahlias and lavender and damask rose.
O dear old flowers, ye are blooming yet,—
Each year afresh your lovely radiance glows:
But where are they who saw your beauty's dawn?
Ah, with the flowers of other years they long ago
have gone!

They long have gone, but ye are still as fair
  As when the brides of eighty years ago
Plucked your soft roses for their waving hair,
  And blossoms o'er their bridal-veils to strow.
Alas, your myrtle on a later day
Marked those low mounds where 'neath the willows' shade at last they lay!

Beside the walk the drowsy poppies sway,
  More deep of hue than is the reddest rose,
And dreamy-warm as summer's midmost day.
  Proud, languorous queens of slumberous repose—
Within their little chalices they keep
The mystic witchery that brings mild, purple-lidded sleep.

Drowse on, soft flowers of quiet afternoons,—
  The breezes sleep beneath your lulling spell;
In dreamy silence all the garden swoons,
  Save where the lily's aromatic bell
Is murmurous with one low-humming bee,
As oozy honey-drops are pilfered by that filcher wee.

The poets' flower, the pale narcissus, droops
  Like that lorn youth beside the fountain's brink;
Aslumber are the phlox's purple troops,
  And every musky rose and spicy pink;
Asleep the snowdrop's tiny milken spheres,
And all the fuchsia's little white and crimson
    chandeliers.

A sweet seclusion this of sun and shade,
  A calm asylum from the busy world,
Where greed and restless care do ne'er invade,
  Nor news of 'change and mart each morning whirled
Round half the globe; no noise of party feud
Disturbs this peaceful spot nor mars its perfect
    quietude.

But summer after summer comes and goes,
  And leaves the garden ever fresh and fair;
May brings the tulip, golden June the rose,
  And August winds shake down the mellow pear.
Man blooms and blossoms, fades and disappears,—
But scarce a tribute pays the garden to the passing
    years.

Nay, time has served but to enhance its charms,
  And for a century the folk have blest
This glowing isle amid their sea of farms,
  On which 'tis sweet the tired eyes to rest.
O'er all the land its flowery spell is cast,
A fragrant chain that links the present with the
    misty past.

And here the daffodils still yield their gold,
  And hollyhocks display their satin wheels,
The soft harebells as in the days of old
  Ring out their carillon of fairy peals,
And dandelion-balls nod o'er the grass
And give from out their fluffy store to all the winds
    that pass.

The droning bees still sip ambrosial dew
  Within the spiral foxglove's purple tents;
Emboldened by the poppy's angry hue,
  Sweet-williams hold their little parliaments,
Discussing in a silken undertone
The mullein's insolence for that, from fields plebeian
    blown,

He dares to flaunt his vulgar woollen face
  Among the garden's aristocracy.
Long nurtured in this rare and cloistered place,
  These gentles hold themselves of high degree,
Disdaining as a common, low-born weed
Each wilding bloom that traces not his line from
    ancient seed.

O fair the larkspur's slender tufts of blue,
  And fair the saffron-kirtled columbine;
Fair is the lily from whose luscious dew
  The elfin-folk distil their honeyed wine.
The flags are fair, and fair the flowers that ope
And spread the sweet, old-fashioned redolence of
    heliotrope.

Fair is the sweet-pea's witching little face,
  And fair the dodder's reels of amber thread;
Fair is the slim brocade of dainty lace
  The sweet alyssum weaves along each bed.
All, all is fair within the garden's bound;
No sweeter or more lovely spot, I ween, could e'er
    be found.

And here, methinks, might poet-lovers' sighs
  Chime with their ladies' sweetly winsome talk,
Here Astrophel adore his Stella's eyes,
  And Waller with his Saccharissa walk,
Or Herrick frame a flowery verse to please
His silken-bodiced Julia here beneath the cherry-
    trees.

Ah, Herrick, what a sunny charm is thine,
  Rare laureate-singer of the lovely flowers!
Across thy page the rosy garlands twine,
  And dewy April melts in fragrant showers
Of cloudy blossoms, pink and white and red,
And May-Day maidens weave a wreath to crown
    their Poet's head.

O sweet old English gardens, he is gone,—
  Green Devon lanes, ye know his face no more;
But long as dew-kissed buds shall wake at dawn
  And daffodils sway by the grassy shore,
So long will Herrick's floral music sound,
And Memory's greenest tendrils climb to wreathe
    his name around.

And here on dreamy August afternoons
  I love to pore upon his golden book;
And here among the roses that are June's,
  On some green bench within a bowery nook,
Where rosy petal-drift may strew the page,
'Tis sweet to read the pensive numbers of old Persia's
    sage,

Omar Khayyám, the wisest of the wise.
  Ah, now in balmy Naishápúr he sleeps
These almost thousand years; and where he lies
  His well-loved rose each spring her petals weeps.
Of what may be hereafter no man knows,—
Then let us live to-day, he cried, as lives the lovely
    rose!

O stately roses, yellow, white, and red,
  As Omar loved you, so we love to-day.
Some roses with the vanished years have sped,
  And some our mothers' mothers laid away
Among their bridal-gowns' soft silken folds,
Where each pale petal for their sons a precious
    memory holds.

And some we find among the yellowed leaves
  Of slender albums, once the parlor's pride,
Where faint-traced ivy pattern interweaves
  The mottoes over which the maiden sighed.
O faded roses, did they match your red,
Those fair young cheeks whose color long ago with
    yours has fled?

And still doth balmy June bring many a rose
  To crown the happy garden's loveliness.
Against the house the old sweet-brier grows
  And cheers its sadness with soft, warm caress,
As fragrant yet as in the far-off time
When that old mansion's fairest mistress taught its
    shoots to climb.

Enveloped in their tufted velvet coats
  The sweet, poetical moss-roses dream;
And petal after petal softly floats
  From where the tea-rose spreads her fawn
    and cream,—
Like fairy barks on tides of air they flow,
And rove adown the garden silently as drifting snow.

Near that old rose named from its hundred leaves
  The lovely bridal-roses sweetly blush;
The climbing rose across the trellis weaves
  A canopy suffused with tender flush;
The damask roses swing on tiny trees,
And here the seven-sisters glow like floral
    pleiades.

Nor lacks there music in this lovely close,—
  The music of the oriole's soft lute,
The gush of cadenced melody that flows
  And echoes from the blue-bird's fairy flute;
And here beside the fountain's mossy brink
There rings the lilting laughter of the happy
    bobolink.

From forth the branches of the lilac tree
  The robin-redbreast's bubbling ditties well;—
O cherished will his name forever be,
  For he it was, as olden stories tell,
That eased the crown upon the Saviour's head
And with the bleeding thorn stained his own breast
    forever red!

And now and then the shy wood-robin comes
  And from the pear tree pours his liquid notes;
The black-bird plays among the purple plums;
  The humming-bird about the garden floats
And like a bright elf wings his darting flight,
A shimmering, evanescent point of green and golden
    light.

Down in the lily's creamy cup he dips,
  Then whirrs to where the honeysuckle showers
Its luscious essences; but most he sips
  From out the deep, red-throated trumpet-flowers;—
Sweet booty there awaits the spoiler's stealth
As horn by horn he rifles all their summer-hoarded
    wealth.

The ragged-robins gaze with pleased surprise
  Upon the jewelled beauty flashing there;
The pansies open wide their velvet eyes
  And ponder sweetly on that rover fair,
Until the purple Canterbury-bell
Chimes out its little curfew tolling them to slumber's
    spell.

* * *

O sweet is every rural sight and sound
  That greets us in the pleasant countryside,—
The fields of crimson clover walled around
  With greenest hedges, fertile valleys wide,
Long, wooded slopes, and many a grassy hill,
And peaceful, silver rivers flowing on from mill to
    mill.

Sweet is the odor of the warm, soft rain
  In violet-days, when spring opes her green
    heart;
And sweet the apple trees along the lane
  Whose lovely blossoms all too soon depart;
And sweet the brimming dew that overfills
The golden chalices of all the trembling daffodils.

Sweet is the fragrance of the fruity vine,
  And sweet the rustle of the broad-leaved corn;
And sweet the lowing of the great-eyed kine
  Among the milking-sheds at early morn
As they await the farmer's red-cheeked girls,
While still the spiders' filmy webs are bright with
    dewy pearls.

And sweet the locust's drowsy monotone,
  And sweet the ring-dove's brooding plaint at eve;
And sweet from far-off meadows newly mown
  The breath of hay that tempts the bees to leave
The corridors of hollyhocks; and sweet
To see the sun-browned reapers in among the ripened
    wheat.

But sweeter far in this old garden close
  To loiter 'mid the lovely, old-time flowers,
To breathe the scent of lavender and rose,
  And with old poets pass the peaceful hours.
Old gardens and old poets,—happy he
Whose quiet summer days are spent in such sweet
    company!

And now is gone the dreamy afternoon,—
  The sun has sunk below yon western height;
The pallid silver of the harvest-moon
  Floods all the garden with its soft, weird light.
The flowers long since have told their dewy beads,
And naught is heard except the frogs' small choir in
    distant meads.

SONNETS.

THE GOLDEN DAYS OF OLD ROMANCE.

I LOVE the golden days of old romance
That live for us in legend and in story,—
The Age of Gold when man was in his glory,
The feats of fairies and their moonlight dance,
The stately jousts with noble knights a-prance,
And lordly loves in castles gray and hoary.
And so I turn to some old allegory
Of merry England, or of sunny France,
Or dreamy Spain; and all entranced I sit
With mystic Arthur at the Table Round,
Or visit that dark vale where Roland wound
His last sad horn, or thread the purple light
Of Spenser's woods, or laugh with him who writ
Of old La Mancha's crazed, fantastic knight.

TO BION.

On his 'Lament for Adonis.'

THE woe of widowed Cypris and the groan
Of that sweet lady drooping o'er the bed
Where lay the form of lovely Adon dead,
Whose too, too early death she did bemoan
For that it left her loverless and lone
Amid the tears the Loves lamenting shed,—
These dolors have in later poets bred
The melancholy music of thy moan,
O gentle Bion. On this languid string
Young Moschus, mourning thine own parting, played;
Sweet Spenser, stroking its sad minors, made
His moan for Sidney, as for hapless King
Great Milton. Last the noble Laureate laid
The 'In Memoriam' as his offering.

SPENSER.

I WENT with Spenser into Faerie Land,
And passed through purple forests deep and wide;
Down dim, enchanted glades where I espied
The lovely hamadryads' sylvan band.
Along the marge of many a golden strand
We swept in cedarn shallops down the tide;
And ever as we fared he magnified
The name of Gloriana high and grand.
O mighty Dreamer! great Idealist!
The fields of Phantasie are thy demesne.
Sweet is the marriage-music thou dost play,
And sweet to hear thee pipe the shepherd's lay;
But sweeter far in summertide to list
To the stately measures of thy 'Faerie Queene.'

THE GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES.

On a Picture by Sir Frederic Leighton.

FAR on the western borders of the world,
Hard by the utmost pale of sunset seas,
Where never mortal men have felt the breeze
Of those dim regions murmur round the furled
And idle sails of vessels tempest-whirled
Far from their course,—dwell the Hesperides,
Forever languorous laid in poppied ease
On beds of amaranth with dews empearled.
Sweet are their days; no other care have they
Than watching o'er that fruitage fair and golden
Which Earth to Hera at her wedding gave.
A Paradise is theirs, and poets olden
Have sung how mortals ever yet essay
To reach those Isles of Bliss beyond the wave.

IN POET-LAND.

O WHO will leave sad care and go with me
To that enchanted land where Poets dwell—
A glorious brotherhood—in some far dell
Among the meads of golden Arcady!
There blind old Homer, lord of poesy,
And Virgil, his far son, hear Dante tell
Of that dread pilgrimage through Heaven and Hell.
There Chaucer joys in sunny minstrelsy,
And gentle Spenser floats in silver streams
Of phantasie; and ah, what raptures run
From Shakespeare's lute that shames the nightingale!
There Milton meditates celestial themes,
Keats paints his purple page, and Tennyson
Is singing Arthur and the Holy Grail.

VENICE.

THEY told me thou wert fallen to decay,
Old Venice, and hadst lost thine ancient pride;
But as upon thy silent streets I glide
And mark the stately piles that line the way,
And all thy spires and domes in dim array
Soft mirrored in the Adriatic's tide,—
I cannot think thy glory all has died.
Nay! in the calmness of thy later day
Thou hast the mellow bloom of ripened age;
Gone is thy youth, yet thou art still as fair
As any dove that haunts thy holy square.
Like Ariadne's was thy heritage,—
A lonely queen beside the silver sea,
Sad but forever beautiful to be!

THE MAKERS OF FLORENCE.

I TROD the streets of that fair Tuscan town
And saw the men that Florence called her own;
In pictured effigy and sculptured stone
Repose those peerless sons of old renown.
Far-thoughted Galileo there looks down,
And Michael Angelo, severe and lone,
With that same sleeping strength that he
has shown
In his own 'Moses.' And I marked the frown
Of him who traversed Hell and Paradise;
And, near the stone whereon great Dante dreamed,
Calm Brunelleschi's upward-gazing eyes
Fixt rapturous upon his glorious dome;
And last, San Marco's Monk whose lightnings
beamed
Like some pure star in that dark night of Rome!

THE GRAVE OF SHELLEY.

THE cypress throws across the yellowed stone
Its darkness gathered from the countless years;
The sad, wan flowers drop their pallid tears,
And by the moon the night-owl makes her moan.
And yet no narrow tomb claims him its own,
For where the riotous sea-wind uprears
The foaming billows 'neath the starry spheres,
Forever are his deathless ashes blown.
O Heart of Hearts, bright Ariel of the dawn!
The most ethereal of poetic race!
Like young Actaeon saw he face to face
Divinest Beauty with her veil withdrawn;—
Was it for this he passed from earth so young
And left so soon that glorious lyre unstrung?

THE GRAVE OF KEATS.

HERE lies young Adonais, stricken low
All in the dewy morning of his days.
Upon his sleep the soft moon bends her gaze,
As on the Latmian shepherd's long ago,
And for her own loved Poet pours her woe.
Here no dark cypress-tree its shadow sways,
But through the grass the lowly ivy strays
And tender violets in sorrow grow.
Above his earthly bed we stand and weep,
And yet we know his spirit never dies,
Sweeter than all the songs he ever sung.
Soothed in the languor of eternal sleep,
Like his beloved Endymion he lies,
Forever beautiful, forever young!

SWITZERLAND.

I SAW thine orchards as they lay aglow
With April's bloom; I saw thy lower vales
Roll their green waves high as the fields where fails
All verdure, 'neath the icy winds that blow
Across those wastes of everlasting snow.
I stood among thy lofty forest dales
And saw the peaceful lake, the mirrored sails,
And all the little universe below.
Emblem of Freedom, Switzerland, art thou!
Thy air, thy soil, thy mountains, all are free;
Wild-free thy streams that from the high cliff's brow
Leap joyous down to meet the southern sea.
Before thy Tell's beloved name we bow
And hail thee perfect type of Liberty!

OXFORD.

WHO loveth not the hundred-towered town
By which the Isis' lingering waters flow,—
Those mediæval streets where silent go
The pensive scholars clad in cap and gown;
Green gardens whose deep quietude can drown
All worldly thought; the carven fanes where blow
The rapturous organs, and whose dim panes glow
With blazoned saints and kings of far renown!
A city of enchantment thou dost seem,
Rare Oxford, and thy sweet and tranquil charm
Comes like the soothing of an old-world dream
To cheer our restless days, and to disarm
The blinded ones who scorn fair Learning's fame
And rudely seek to mar her ancient name.

IRELAND.

THY memory, green Erin, haunteth me
Since first I stood upon Killarney's shore,
Or saw from Limerick's spires the Shannon pour
Its turbid waters towards the western sea;
And in my fancy's hour I turn to thee
To muse upon thy never-failing store
Of ancient myth and legendary lore,
Enshrining every glade and rock and tree.
Across thy lonely bogs the Banshee moans,
At eve the fiddle cries in mystic tones,
And elfin-folk dance on the moon-lit green.
Thy scenes I love, but chiefly Mulla's dell,
Where Spenser, rapt in rich enchantment's spell,
Saw his great vision of the 'Færie Queene.'

AN OLD-TIME GARDEN.

O FOR a garden of the olden time
Where none but long-familiar flowers grow,
Where pebbled paths go winding to and fro,
And honeysuckles over arbors climb!
There would I have sweet mignonette and thyme,
With hollyhocks and dahlias all arow,
The hyacinth inscribed with words of woe,
The small blue-bell that beats a dainty chime
For elfin ears; and daffodillies, too,
The sleepy poppy, and the marigold,
The peony with petals manifold,
And ragged-robins, pink and white and blue.
All these and more I'd have, and back of all
A thousand roses on a mossy wall!

ON A PORTRAIT OF LUCRETIA MOTT.

I LOOK on that serene and saintly face
And mark the placid beauty pictured there;
In that calm countenance no weight of care
Nor darkness of distress could e'er efface
Or overshade the sweet, old-fashioned grace.
She seems an angel sent to do and dare,
A gentle martyr fortified to bear
Truth's sorest trials. Yet here is no sad trace
Of her life's battles; from those tranquil eyes
There beams a perfect peace. O noble soul,
What do not Truth and Freedom owe to thee!
Thy name we love, thy memory we prize;
And round thy brow we see the aureole
That crowned thy life of sweet philanthropy.

IN MEMORIAM.

A— M—

ALAS, that fairest flowers must fall at last!
Alas, that earth should lose such men as he,
And we be reft of one whose courtesy
Made glad the very children as he passed!
In finest mould his gentle soul was cast,
Learning and wisdom his in large degree;
His days were spent in calm serenity
Communing with the great ones of the Past.
Farewell, rare friend! All empty is thy place,
And e'er shall be; yet we who stay behind
Sweet comfort take as reverently we scan
Thy blameless life, that fine and courtly grace
Of thine, which, wedded to a noble mind,
Made rich 'the grand old name of gentleman.'

'THE GROVES WERE GOD'S FIRST TEMPLES.'

THE groves were God's first temples, and to-day
Should man yet worship there, were he unwise?
The gray old woods whose mighty trunks uprise
In silent majesty, where wildings sway
Their fragrant bells and scent the air with May;
The fields whose flowery beauty open lies
Beneath the glory of the summer skies:—
These have been nature's simple shrines for aye,
These are the temples of the living God.
And so for dome the over-arching blue
I'll take, for floor the soft and verdant sod,
For aisles the trees in stately avenue,—
While myriad choirs of birds in hymns of bliss
Fill all the heart of this vast edifice.

SPRING.

WELCOME, thrice welcome to thee, lovely Spring,
Sweet time of mellow rains and gentle dew!
Like Flora comest thou, with retinue
Of every tender plant and leafy thing.
At thy approach the world is wakening,
And tree and shrub and grass their life renew;
The meads are starred with flowers of fairest hue,
And orchards wide their blossomed fragrance fling.
Emblem of budding innocence thou art,
Sweet, gentle, virgin season of the year;
A note of love awakes in every heart
When earth enrobes herself in thy rich green.
Then come, sweet youths and maidens all, come near,
And weave a flowery crown for this fair Queen!

SUMMER.

SWEET, languorous days of perfect calm and peace,
And drowsy somnolence, we love you well:
Fields, woods, and gardens own your lulling spell,
And nature from her labors finds surcease.
On high slow drifts the soft cloud's billowy fleece,
Within the lily's golden-dusty cell
The bees are murmuring, the ring-doves tell
Their evening sorrow, and the farm's increase
Wafts from the bursting mows its odors sweet.
The sheep-bells tinkle faintly on the hills,
And where the vales are swooning in the heat
Upon his droning lute the locust shrills.
O balmy Summer, dear thy soft repose
As is the fragrance of thy sweetest rose!

AUTUMN.

'TIS golden Autumn, and a mellow haze
Envelops all the dreamy countryside;
Soon o'er the world will sweep a crimson tide
Of fairy fire and set the woods ablaze
With sullen splendor. By the dusty ways
The golden-rod is drooping, and beside
The wall the grapes are swelling in their pride
Of purple lusciousness. The drowsy days
Are almost silent, save where orchard trees
Are dropping down their ripe and ruddy store,
Or where the farmer beats the threshing-floor
With rhythmic flail. Sweet nature's symbols these,
That mark the evening of the dying year
And prelude the approach of winter drear.

WINTER.

NOW earth within the arms of Winter old
Is softly slumbering, and deep and warm
The mantle lies that shields her tender form
From bitter blast and storm and numbing cold.
Upland and meadow, sombre wood and wold,
All silent lie beneath the frost-king's charm;
O'er every frozen stream and sleeping farm
The mage's spell is laid. Like ruddy gold
Low swings the sun in waning afternoon
Down towards the world's blue edge; then comes the moon
And silvers all the land with fairy light.
Within, the hearth glows warm, and 'tis the time
Of fireside joys, when gentle hearts are bright
And beat as sweetly as the sleigh-bells' chime.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

A MAY-DAY INVITATION.

COME, let us leave the busy town
And to the country hasten down,—
We'll go this very day!
The hills and dales are deckt with green,
On every bush the buds are seen,
And all the countryside is sweet with May.

What pleasure can the city yield
When every grove and verdant field
Is drest in spring array?
Or who would wish a dusty street
When he can rest his weary feet
In meadows odorous with flowery May?

The robin plumes his ruddy breast,
And to his mate upon the nest
He sings a roundelay;
And all the golden afternoon
The blue-bird pipes his happy tune
And flits among the fragrant fields of May.

The violets empearled with dew
Reflect the heaven's perfect blue,
The tulips softly sway;
The primrose haunts the woodland hills,
And golden-hearted daffodils
Dance gaily in the balmy winds of May.

The orchards are a lovely sight,—
The trees embowered in pink and white,
Each like a great bouquet;
And wide they spread their spicy scent
Till all the air is redolent,
And O, we wish that it were always May!

The city bindeth men with care,—
Engaged in this and that affair
They wear their lives away;
But in the country's leafy lanes
Simplicity securely reigns,—
Care sorteth not with happy-hearted May.

Then leave the desk and come along,
We'll go and hear the robin's song,—
Let's haste without delay!
We'll drink a draught of morning dew,
And wandering the meadows through
We'll see the country girls bring in the May.

WHITTIER'S BIRTHDAY.

DEAR Friend, we come to yield anew
The reverence we owe thy name,
And celebrate with fresh acclaim
Our Quaker Poet, strong and true.

For though there needs no day of praise
For him who held with all his sect
That love and honor and respect
Belong alike to all our days, —

Yet do we love in special wise
To celebrate his natal day,
And, pausing in our onward way,
Look back awhile with reverent eyes

Upon his long and noble life,
A life as blameless and serene
As any that the world has seen,—
Yet one that had its doubts and strife,

Its martyrdom to sternest duty
  In days when men were weak with fear,
  A life that grew from year to year
Nearer the type of godly beauty.

Lowly his birth, his fortunes low,
  His kin a plain and simple folk;
  The weight of toil and labor's yoke
He learned from early years to know.

And yet there blossomed in his heart
  A passion native-born and strong,
  That made him love the poet's song
And practise it with homely art.

A 'barefoot boy' he oft would climb,
  In lonely mood, his favorite height,
  And, gazing o'er the hills, recite
The songs of Burns, or set to rhyme

His thoughts of fields and woods below,
  The grassy meads and joyous brooks,
  The flowery banks and sylvan nooks,
And the blue river's peaceful flow.

And as he strengthened day by day
  His touch upon the lyric string,
  The world was glad to hear him sing,
This nightingale in Quaker gray.

But when there swept across the land
  The ebb and flow of Freedom's tide,
  The tuneful harp was laid aside,
And Whittier stood hand in hand

With those great souls so true and brave,
  Who led the van of that crusade
  Which cleansed the sullied land and made
A freeman of the shackled slave.

'Twas then he shone upon our sight
  A second Milton among men,
  The poet scourging with his pen
The enemies of truth and right.

And still like that great Puritan—
  When peace succeeded iron war,
  He donned his singing robes once more,
And, newly heartened by the span

Of those dark years, he sang with tone
  So full of hope, so large and free,
  It made the mourning nation see
That o'er the hills the sun still shone.

He sang in songs of many keys,—
  He sang of home and sweet content,
  And through his verses came the scent
Of flowers, and sounds of birds and bees.

He sang of duty, faith, and love,
  He sang the brotherhood of man,
  And ever shorter made the span
That parts us from the life above.

The life above,—ah, it is thine,
  Dear Heart, for, ever through the years,
  Through all thy human hopes and fears,
There gleamed a spirit half divine,—

A spirit that in all its moods
  Of joy and grief obeyed the Light,
  That read the laws of God aright
And followed the Beatitudes.

His creed,—and who shall name his creed?—
  If so we may those feelings call
  That were too wide for ritual,
That asked no priest to intercede

With service born of man's device,—
  But rested in the faith content
  That God is good, that reverent
And upright living is the price

Of joy beyond. So while he stood
  Within the faith his fathers held,
  His great and loving heart out-welled
Towards all the human brotherhood.

O gentle Friend, serene and strong,
  O Poet, sweet and tender-true,
  Thy work was such as martyrs do,
Thy life one grand and noble song!

ENGLAND.

(*To C. and M.*)

THE day is fair, the breeze is free,
  The ship has crossed the bar,
And you are fleeting o'er the sea
  To lands that lie afar.

My fancy to old England turns,
  As o'er the deep you fare,
And memory the picture brings
  Of all that waits you there.

I see the velvet meadows walled
  With hedges deep and green,
The lordly forest trees that mark
  The nobleman's demesne;

The gray old church and Norman tower
  Embosomed deep in trees,
The fields aflame with poppy-heads
  Where flit the drowsy bees;

The stately minster's Gothic pile,
  The noble heritage
Bequeathed us by the living faith
  That stirred the Middle Age;

Old gardens and old village inns,
  With all their old-time charm,
And ancient coaching-roads that wind
  By ancient garth and farm.

By Cam's and Isis' banks I see
  The hoary college towns,
Where cloistered scholars pace the walks
  In mediæval gowns;

Where silver-chiming vesper bells
  Peal from a score of spires,
And glorious anthems soar on high
  From snowy-vested choirs;

Where old libraries, oaken-ceiled
  And dim with Learning's haze,
Entice the traveller to stay
  And dream away his days.—

And over all that storied land,
  In every burgh and shire,
Are spots that poets' lines or lives
  Have made forever dear.

Westmoreland's peaks majestic are,
  And fair each lake and fell,
But doubled is their beauty now
  That Wordsworth here did dwell.

His great heart was in harmony
  With nature's graver moods,
And in his song he showed the soul
  Of these sweet solitudes.

And now he sleeps in Grasmere vale,
  The Rotha's bank beside,
But still his calm, sweet voice is heard
  As is the Rotha's tide.

The level moors of Lincolnshire
  Recall a later name,
The peerless laureate who sang
  Of Celtic Arthur's fame.

Across these downs he wandered oft,
  By beck and lonely dune;
He loved their sombre beauty well,—
  They set his heart atune.

And ever in the after years
  These boyhood scenes were dear,
And through his every song there floats
  Some breath of Lincolnshire.

In ancient Stratford's holy fane
  Immortal Shakespeare sleeps,
And placid Avon by his grave
  Her silent vigil keeps.

His native county's name will aye
  With his own name entwine;
His fancy drew no fairer scenes,
  Green Warwickshire, than thine.

Thy peaceful fields and silver streams
  Upon his page we find;
Thy woods are like the Arcady
  Where dwelt sweet Rosalind.

As in the rural lanes you roam
  Of olden Devonshire,
The echoes of the golden harp
  Of Herrick you may hear.

Beside these brooks he loved to pipe
  In summer's dreamy hours,
And watch the hock-cart coming in
  Engarlanded with flowers.

Along these leafy lanes he trudged
  To wassail and to wake,
Or where the rosy country girls
  Swung through the barley-break.

Old Devon's flowery meads and dales
  Can never withered be,
For Herrick shed on them the dew
  Of immortality!

And so o'er all that ancient land,
  From Cornwall to the Tweed,
Her poets' names are ever green,
  And to this day, indeed,

Along the Canterbury road
  With Chaucer we may ride,
Or pace the placid Ouse's bank
  By pensive Cowper's side;

In stately Penshurst's summer woods
  With courtly Sidney stray,
Or muse beneath the church-yard elms
  With meditative Gray.

Fair are the fields of sunny France,
  And fair is Italy,
But dearest is the love we bear,
  Sweet English land, to thee.

Thy Saxon blood we share, and all
  Thine ancient memories;
To thee with filial love we look
  Across the orient seas.

We love thine old ancestral worth
  Throughout the ages long,
But most we love thee for thy wealth
  Of glorious English Song!

A DREAM OF OTHER DAYS.

I FELL asleep upon a summer's day
As on a shady woodland bank I lay,
And as I slept there came to me a dream
Of days of eldest time. The land did seem
Lovely and happy with a strange delight;
All round were flowery fields and regions bright,
Enchanted groves, and brooks that danced in glee
Down ferny slopes to meet the silver sea
Far in the west. There spicéd zephyrs played,
And birds of wondrous plumage charmed the ear in
every glade.

And in that lovely land there dwelt a race
Of godlike youths and maidens; every face
Was glowing with a comeliness divine.
There moved the beings of Olympic line,
Tall gods and goddesses, among the bloom
Of dim Hesperian trees that spread a gloom
Of purple shade around; great heroes, too,
And all the sylvan folk that Hellas knew,—
Dryads and fauns and nymphs in beauty's glory,
And every fair familiar form that lives in ancient
story.

Divine Apollo sat within the shade
Among his flocks, and on twin pipes he played
Such strains as held his fleecy audience rapt;
The trees bent low to hear, the fountain lapt
Its marge in joy, and all the air was thrilled.
And then I heard the distance faintly filled
By Orpheus, as in echo to his sire,
Where, to the weeping of his plaintive lyre,
He strayed slow-footed down the grassy lea,
And ever sadly moaned, 'Eurydice! Eurydice!'

Across the silver tides of that far sea
Young Jason, dauntless prince of Thessaly,
Fared in his questing of the Golden Fleece.
With him were ranged the chiefs of early Greece,
Castor and Pollux, mighty Heracles,
Theseus, and Meleager, and with these
Full many another; while the Argo broke
The virgin billows with her sacred oak,
The comrades smiting with the ashen oar
Those wondering seas whose waters ne'er had seen a ship before.

Beside a woodland fountain's turfy shore
I saw a youth who, ever bending o'er
The watery mirror, seemed with his sweet grace
To lend a two-fold beauty to the place.
Ah, foolish boy, will never maiden prize
A look of love from those soft violet eyes?
In Hellas there are girlish charms as fair
As is the picture which thou watchest there;—
Shall it be said Narcissus took no bride,
But ever loved an imaged shape and in his folly died?

And there the great Odysseus did I see,
Recounting to the fair Penelope
And to the Grecian heroes gathered round,
The tales of all the wonders he had found
In that far voyage of his,—the Lotus-land,
Of Circe's spells which men may not withstand
Save by advice divine, the Sun-god's isle,
And of the Sirens with their luring wile;—
And long and loud those goodly heroes laughed
To hear how Polyphemus was outdone by human
craft!

Of Scylla and Charybdis all the tale
He told to them, and every face was pale
O'er that untoward hap; and then he turned
And pictured all he saw when he sojourned
In that Phæacian realm, where summer knows
Not any ceasing and where ceaseless grows
The peerless fruitage by the palace wall.
And when Odysseus had related all,—
'O come, my comrades, come!' I heard him cry,
'We'll sail unto the Earthly Paradise ere yet we
die!'

Two beings there whose beauty none may tell
Went hand in hand among the asphodel,
Cupid and Psyche, an immortal pair;
Of godlike presence he, and she as fair
As Cytherea's self. O gentle bride,
O patient pilgrim-soul so sorely tried!—
Hasting with tireless step through regions dread,
O'er mountains wild and down among the dead,—
Till Love divine to crown thy Faith was given,
And through thy earthly trials thou found'st eternal
joy in heaven!

When night came down and spread its perfect peace
Upon that dreamland picture of old Greece,
I cast my eyes along a mountain side,
And there within a sacred cave espied
A beauteous shepherd youth who lay aswoon
In slumberous repose. Low swung the moon,
And Luna leaning from her silver car
Just touched his drowsy lips, then sped afar
Across the starry heights,—while from that kiss
Endymion sleeping smiled as conscious of immortal
bliss.

When now at length the soft moon veiled her light
Behind the walls of Latmos' snowy height,
And rosy Dawn proclaimed another day,—
My lovely vision faded all away,
Goddess and nymph and hero;—but to me
Was left the fragrance of their memory,
A dower sweet; yet with it sad regret
At thought that human kind may never yet
Again, as in the glorious days of old,
Commune with the divinities of that fair Age of
Gold.

SWEET SPRING IS HERE.

SWEET spring is here, and o'er the earth
A verdant garb is seen,
As drenched in balm of April rains
The fields put on their green.
The apple-orchards, all transformed,
Are wrapt in clouds of bloom,
And here the robin loves to swing and breathe
the rare perfume.

The dandelions by thousands gleam,
And every little one
Seems, with its round of golden rays,
Like to a fairy sun.
The tulips burn with crimson flame
Along each narrow bed,—
Like dainty elfin lamps they glow, and light
the lawn with red.

The violets uplift their heads
  And star the grass with blue,
The daffodils hold up their cups
  To catch the morning dew.
The small May-apple spreads abroad
  Its leafy little tent,
And with the jasmine's balmy breath the vale
    is redolent.

Beside the sylvan banks unseen
  Shy Quaker-ladies blow,
And on the hill the blood-root spreads
  Her drifts of vernal snow.
From oak-tree roots the primrose runs,
  And paints with paly gold
The carpeting of withered leaves that clothes
    the sombre wold.

Where is the dear hepatica
  With its sweet baby face?
There, in the shadow of the wood,
  It peeps with modest grace.
And near it is that child of spring,
  The pale anemone,
While in the mossy dell the fern uprears her
    tiny tree.

Down by the pond 'tis like a camp
  Of mimic state, I ween,
For all the tender willows stand
  Pavilioned o'er with green.
Wild honeysuckles pour their scent
  Upon the woodland breeze,
And tempt from far-off pasture fields the
    golden-belted bees.

The crocuses and hyacinths,
  Sweet infants of the year,
Show dainty faces dimmed at dawn
  With many a dewy tear.
The hedges of japonica
  Have donned their spring attire,
And border all the grassy lawn with walls of
    flowery fire.

The orchards, lanes, and meadows all
  Are odorous with May,
And every happy little bird
  Is carolling his lay.
The hills and valleys, woods and streams,
  Are smiling far and near,
And all the world is filled with joy because
    sweet Spring is here.

FLOWERS AND FAIRIES.

TO

DOROTHY

SYDNEY

MARTHA

MARGARET

ISABELLA

DOROTHEA

BEATRICE

WALDO

THOSE LITTLE LOVERS OF THE

FLOWERS AND FAIRIES

THESE VERSICLES I GIVE

AURORA.

WHEN the rising sun is tinting
All the sky with opal hue,
Comes the sweet Aurora tripping
For her morning draught of dew.

There she quaffs the rose's nectar,
And the morning-glory's wine;
Hyacinthine honey sips she,
Vowing it a drink divine.

And the lovely flowers regretful
As they see her go away,
Sighing forth their gentle sorrow,
Breathe a fragrance all the day.

CROCUSES.

FRAIL children of the early spring,
We love you well;
Ye seem to tell
By your rathe blossoming,
That time of leaf and bud and fruit is coming.

First-born are ye of all the flowers,
Ye gentle ones;
Sweet April runs
Her course of dewy hours
Heart-happy that she saw your early coming.

Close on late snows your blooms are seen,
Pale vernal things;
The robin sings,
The grass grows rainy-green,
And all the world awakens at your coming.

When golden June scents all the air
With her sweet rose,
And lovely glows
Each bed, we'll still declare
'Tis not more dear than was your springtime
coming!

WHITE VIOLETS.

A BAND of sweet blue violets,
All on an April day,
Went down into a sylvan dell
At hide-and-seek to play.
But while they played a bat flew by,
Which gave them such a fright
That every little countenance
Was changed to milky white!

THE FAIRY SKY.

ABOVE a glassy woodland pool
Queen Mab her body bent,
And saw her face, a lovely moon,
In that small firmament.
And for the stars the spangles all
That on her robe did shine
Made such a twinkling there, I vow
Was ne'er a sky so fine!

THE SNOW-DROP.

THE snow-drop, pearly white of hue,
Each morning sheds a fragrant dew,
Which little goblins come and get
And use to bait their beetle-net.

IN BLOSSOM-TIME.

IN blossom-time the orchard trees,
  Aroused by April's balmy breeze,
  In loveliness are glowing;
All blushing with their rosy bloom,
They lade the winds with faint perfume
  That over them are blowing.

The world is all a-swim in seas
Of pearly foam where late the trees
  In sombreness were growing.
Like banks of tinted clouds are they
Which summer winds at close of day
  Across the skies are strowing.

I watched them in their dawning fair,
I watch them as they fill the air
With petals earthward snowing;
And as I see their branches thinned
And stript by every passing wind,
I mourn at that quick going.

THE ROSE'S REPLY.

I SAID unto a lovely rose
That in my garden grew,
'When chilly Autumn comes around,
Sweet rose, what will you do?'

Said she, 'When Autumn breezes blow
I'll rain my petals down,
And on them little brookside elves
Will sail to Fairy Town.'

THE FAIRIES' SUPPER.

WHEN fairy-folk sit down to sup
Each has for plate a buttercup,
And for mug a tiny cell
Of the delicate blue-bell
Filled with dew-drops of the rose
Gathered when her buds unclose.
I ween it is a witching sight
To see each bonny little sprite
Seated at the mushroom board
All with toothsome dainties stored.
Here are plates of cricket meat
Dressed with sauce of clover sweet,
Appetizing little pies
Made of wings of bottle-flies;
Omelet of emmet's eggs,
Fricassee of beetles' legs,

Liver of the bumble-bee,
And ragout of chickadee;
Barbecue of lady-birds,
And nut-shells filled with creamy curds
Pilfered while the dairy-girl
Gossiped with the farmer's churl.

The chalice of a daffodil
Is their great bowl, which they fill
With syrup of the wild strawberries
Much esteemed by all the fairies.
Here are gnats' wings, and by these
Many little loaves of cheese
Made of daisies' golden eyes,—
Tadpole tongues of smallest size,
Tiny seed-cakes with their tops
Gemmed with honeysuckle drops,
Salad made of violets blue
Moistened o'er with April dew,
And the roe of small brook-fishes
Served on pink rose-petal dishes,
Strips of candied gad-fly's wing;—
And many another dainty thing

Only to be named aright
By those who have the fairy sight.

While these wee folk feast away
They are cheered by music gay,
For behind the soft sweet-fern,
Where the fire-fly lanterns burn,
Is the band of players hid.
There the green-robed katydid
Tweedles on his violin
Elfin-music high and thin;
The cricket blows his dulcet flute,
And the locust on his lute
Strums a droning monotone,
And silvery melodies are blown
On the little lily horns;
While on shells of small acorns
Stretched across with skin of plum
Little drummers briskly drum,
Pigwiggin deftly keeping time
With his little hare-bell chime.
All the fairies shout with glee
At the dainty minstrelsy;

And the supper being ended,
Each sylph by an elf attended,
They pace among the mossy glades
Listening to the serenades
And sonatas soft and low,
Till the stars begin to glow,—
When at Oberon's command
The tiny company disband,
To ply the tasks with merry cheer
Set them by their sovereign dear.

THE MUSHROOM TENT.

WHEN showers make the woods all wet
The tiny wood-folk run and get
Beneath a mushroom's sheltering eaves,
And there on beds of violet leaves
They sleep secure till cease of rain
Doth send them out to play again.

CHERRY BLOSSOMS.

I RAMBLED in an orchard old
  Where gentle winds were blowing,
And saw the blooming cherry trees
  Their petals downward snowing.
'O stay, sweet blossoms!' cried I then,
  'Withhold your wasteful showers;—
Why will ye scatter thus and fade,
  Ye dainty cherry-flowers?
As when in some fond dream we see
  That die which most we cherish,
So when we love you best, alas,
  Ye flutter down and perish!'

THE FAIRY FLEET.

I SAT beside a forest pool,
And there I chanced to see
Come sweeping o'er the tiny tide
A fairy argosy.

The ships were shells of hazel-nuts
That grow in greenwood dales;
Rose-petals on pine-needle masts
Did serve them for their sails.

The tiny navy moved in state
Before a zephyr light,
And as it swept along, I trow,
It was a winsome sight!

But when the little admiral
Did through his glass spy me,
He turned and with his tiny fleet
Fled far o'er that small sea!

THE BLUE-BELL CLOCK.

THE blue-bell hourly rings her chime
To let the fairies know the time.
She rings it all the long night through,
From set of sun till death of dew;
She rings it through the livelong day,—
And every little elf and fay
Prepares his meals and feeds his flock
By this same dainty little clock.

THE FAIRY CROWN.

I MET three fays within a wood
  As I was walking there,
Who wove a coronal of fern
  Commixed with maidenhair.
'What make ye here, sweet maids,' I cried,
  'With this your dainty craft?'
Whereat the fairest of the three
  Looked up and sweetly laughed,
And said, 'This leafy crown we weave
  To set upon the head
Of our dear Queen, who at dew-fall
  With Oberon will wed.'

POPPIES.

O PERFECT flowers of sweet midsummer days,
The season's emblems ye,
As nodding lazily
Ye kiss to sleep each breeze that near you strays,
And soothe the tired gazer's sense
With lulling surges of your softest somnolence.

Like fairy lamps ye light the garden bed
With tender ruby glow.
Not any flowers that blow
Can match the glory of your gleaming red;
Such sunny-warm and dreamy hue
Before ye lit your fires no garden ever knew.

Bright are the blossoms of the scarlet sage,
And bright the velvet vest
On the nasturtium's breast;
Bright are the tulips when they reddest rage,
And bright the coreopsis' eye;—
But none of all can with your brilliant beauty vie.

Yet nature gifted you with no perfumes:
The sweet old bergamot,
The pale forget-me-not,
And scores of other olden-fashioned blooms,
Abound in balmy fragrancies;—
But ye no honey have to tempt the murmurous bees.

And yet, soft, slumberous flowers, we love you well;
Your glorious crimson tide
The mossy walk beside
Holds all the garden in its drowsy spell;
And walking there we gladly bless
Your queenly grace and all your languorous loveliness.

THE ROSY RAIN.

PIGWIGGIN once a-napping lay
  Pavilioned in the shade
Of a rose-tree, whose petals fell
  And him all overlaid.
But when he woke and found himself
  Deep in the rosy rain,
He got him up and scampered off
  From where he late had lain.

PINK CHEEKS.

IN the starlight kindly fairies
  Gathering the elder-berries
    Make of them an ink,
Which in cups of crocus steeping
Bear they where sweet maids are sleeping
    And paint their cheeks all pink!

THE FAIRIES IN THE DAIRIES.

IN the night-time come the fairies
Breaking into farmers' dairies,
Each one with a lantern bright
Of a glow-worm's shining light.
First they spread a golden gleam
O'er the milk and make it cream,
Giving it a taste more fine
Than their own most dainty wine.
Then they wrap the curded milk
In filters fine of cobweb silk ;—
This they take and quickly squeeze
Into loaves of gilt-edge cheese,
Which they skilfully dispose
Down the dairy-bench in rows.
Next, with neither noise nor clutter,
Fashion they the golden butter,

In a trice by magic power
Making that which costs an hour
Of weary work and many a turn
To the milk-maid with her churn.
Then having moulded it in presses,
They lay it on soft water-cresses,
And sprinkle it with sweetened dew
Gathered from the violets blue.

When their work is deftly done
Ere the rising of the sun,
To the garden out they go
Where the dainty pansies grow.
Here they hold their sprightly dance
In and out among the plants,
Footing featly to the tune
Of the locust's small bassoon
And Pigwiggin's purling whistle
Whittled from a spike of thistle,

Accompanied by pipers three
On their oat-straw pipes so wee.
When morning 'gins to light the sky,
To their woodland homes they hie;
In their rose-leaf beds they creep
And soon are sunk in balmy sleep,
Each little head upon a pillow
Of a downy pussy-willow.

THE DEATH OF THE BEE.

A LITTLE bee in search of sweets
Flew in a lily's bell,
And revelled in the lusciousness
Of that soft honeyed cell.
But as he sipped the nectary,
O'ercome with rich perfume,
He fainted unto death and lay
For aye embalmed in bloom!

PANSIES.

SWEET baby faces do I see
  Along the garden beds,
With pretty caps of velveteen
  Upon their dainty heads.

Some purple are and some are blue,
  And some are golden yellow,
With tiny neckerchief of green
  For every little fellow.

The children of the garden they,
  So gladsome and so merry,
And every one is tended by
  A loving little fairy.

THE QUAKER-LADY.

WITHIN a dewy woodland dell
I spied a Quaker-lady;
Her home was on a mossy bank
Where all was cool and shady.

And as I saw her sitting there
So sweetly and demurely,
I said, 'There's peace within thy heart,
Dear Quaker-lady, surely!'

TRANSLATIONS.

TO MERCURY.

HORACE, I., 10.

O SUASIVE son of Atlas' line,
Dear, artful Mercury, 'twas thine
To teach the fathers of the race
A smoother speech, a gentler grace.

Thou messenger of mighty Jove
And all the gods that dwell above,
To thee I sing, O subtle sire
Alike of thieves and of the lyre!

Apollo, once, reft of his quiver,
With threatening mandates made thee shiver;
Yet angry as he was, he laughed
At thy ox-stealing, infant craft.

Rich Priam, aided by thy wile,
The proud Atridæ did beguile;
Thessalian watch-fires burned in vain,
Unharmed he crossed the hostile plain.

All righteous souls are borne along
To realms of bliss, an airy throng,
Led by that golden rod of thine,
O loved of all the race divine,
Sweet Mercury!

TO VIRGIL.

HORACE, I., 24.

WHY checked or hidden need our sorrows be
For one so fondly loved? Melpomene,
God-gifted mistress of the moving lyre
And melting voice, my melancholy strains inspire!

And does our dear Quintilius repose
In death's enduring sleep? Ah, when shall those
Twin sisters Faith and Justice, Truth severe,
And Modesty another find that is his peer!

Bewept of all the noble was his end,
But chiefest wept of thee, his fondest friend,
My Virgil. Yet thy prayers, alas, are vain
That ask the gods to lend Quintilius again.

What though thy music's magic far excel
That Orphean lute which held the trees in spell,—
Yet never, never can the life be made
To stir again the pulses of that empty shade,

Which Mercury, relentless of our doom,
Drives on before him to the realms of gloom.
Hard fate indeed! But what we cannot cure
Is better borne if we but patiently endure.

TO CALLIOPE.

HORACE, III., 4.

A LENGTHENED strain, Calliope,
Melodious queen, descend and sing,
With plaintive pipe or shrilling voice,
If so it please, or on Phœbean string!

Hear ye, or am I made the sport
Of raptures sweet? I seem to hear,
And stray through hallowed groves, the seat
Of playful winds and pleasant waters clear.

In childhood's hour, when tired with play
I dreaming lay on Voltur's steep,
Far from my home, the storied doves
Embowered my bed with leaves, a verdant heap.

A thing of wonder 'twas to all
Who habit Acherontia's tops,
Or have their homes in loamy meads
Of low Forentum or 'mid Bantine copse—

How, safe from bears and vipers fell,
  A god-protected child I lay
And fearless slept, while I was strewn
  With gathered myrtle and with sacred bay.

Yours, O ye Muses, yours I am,
  If now the Sabine heights I scale,
Or if I joy in Tibur's slopes,
  Or Baiae's strand, or cool Præneste's vale.

Because I love your founts and choirs
  Philippi's rout destroyed not me,—
Nor tree accursed, nor beetling rocks
  Of Palinurus in the stormy sea.

While ye are with me, willingly
  Fierce Bosphorus I'll travel o'er,
A sailor bold, or dauntless dare
  The burning sands of the Assyrian shore.

I'll visit Britons, rude to guests,
  The Concan, loving horse's blood;
Gelonians, quiver-bearing race,
  I'll visit, and, unharmed, the Scythian flood.

To noble Cæsar—seeking end
  Of toils and giving rest from strife
To war-worn troops in distant towns—
  In grot Pierian ye lend new life.

Ye give mild counsel, and rejoice
  In kindly giving it. We know
How Titans cursed and that huge crew
  Were by the falling thunderbolts laid low

Of Him who rules the sluggish earth,
  The teeming marts, the wind-tossed main,
And gloomy realms of Acheron—
  Who governs gods and men with righteous reign.

Dire terror was inspired in Jove
  By that dread band, proud of their might,
The brothers striving to upraise
  Tall Pelion on dark Olympus' height.

But 'gainst Minerva's sounding shield
  Rushing, what could those giants do,
Typhœus, Rhœtus, Mimas strong,
  Porphyrion, threatening form, or he that threw

Uprooted trees, Enceladus,
  The darter bold? Here, keen for fray,
Stood Vulcan, and dame Juno there,
  Divine Apollo, too, who ne'er doth lay

His bow aside, who laves his locks,
  Unloosed, in pure Castalian dew,
Who haunts his woods and Lycian groves,
  The lord of Patara and Delos too.

Ill-counselled force falls self-oppressed;
  Force, rightly ruled, the gods promote
To greater heights, while they abhor
  Forces to every evil end devote.

Let hundred-handed Gyas prove
  How true my maxims are, and famed
Attempter of Diana chaste,
  Orion, by her virgin arrows tamed.

Earth, cast on her own monsters, grieves,
  And mourns her young, to Orcus' gloom
By lightning sent; nor can swift fire
  The mass of Ætna, placed above, consume.

The liver of base Tityus
  The vulture quits not, there assigned
A guard of guilt; Pirithoüs,
  Too fond, is by three hundred chains confined!

THE BANDUSIAN SPRING.

HORACE, III., 13.

O FOUNT that dost the glass outshine,
  May flagons wreathed with flowers be thine!
To-morrow I shall give to thee
A kid, whose forehead swelling free
  In vain foretokens war and love.

Child of the flocks that frisk and play,—
His budding life shall ebb away,
To color like the rosy wine
Thy surface cool and crystalline.

CALIFORNIA

Fierce, burning Sirius knows thee not;
The plough-worn oxen seek the spot
Where thy sweet water flecked with foam
Refreshes all the race that roam.

I'll rank thy name
With founts of fame,
While singing of the ilex tall
That overhangs thy waterfall,
Bandusian Spring!

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